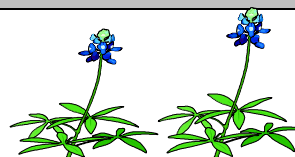


Shot Talk



ACIP Expands Hepatitis B Coverage

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have expanded the eligibility criteria for children and adolescents who may receive hepatitis B vaccine through the Vaccines for Children Program (VFC).

Effective March 1, 1998, all children from birth through 18 years of age are approved to be vaccinated against hepatitis B with vaccine supplied by the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (SAMHD) Vaccines for Children Program (VFC).

Children, who begin the series before their 19th birthday are eligible to complete the series in later years. Individuals who are 19 years of age or older will require the adult formulation of hepatitis B vaccine. For more information contact Angela Lopez, L.V.N., at 207-2089.

Are You Vaccinating Your at-risk Patients Against Hepatitis B?

Since 1982, the Advisory Committee on Immunization practices has recommended that immigrant children, men who have sex with other men, and hemodialysis patients be considered for hepatitis B vaccination.

Despite this fact, these at-risk groups remain seriously under-vaccinated.

Please make sure you take every opportunity you have to vaccinate your patients who fall into these high-risk groups.

"Although most immigrant and first-generation Asian American



children who contract hepatitis B are not very sick during childhood, many of them will pay a huge price in the future for not having received the vaccine."

B U.K. Li, MD: Co-founder & faculty advisor, Asian Pacific American Medical Students Assn.; Immunization Action Coalition Advisory Board

According to unpublished 1996 CDC data, few of the 1 million Asian Pacific Islander children between the ages of 3-13 years in the U.S. have been vaccinated against hepatitis B. The data also reveals that:

- 1-2% of these children are newly infected with HBV each year
- vaccinating these children against HBV will prevent 14,000 chronic infections and 3,000 deaths

In addition to Asian Americans, there are many other immigrant children who are at risk for hepatitis B. Many of these children qualify for free federal vaccine. For information on the Vaccine for Children program and on immigrant children at risk, contact Lin Watson, R.N., Hepatitis & Surveillance Coordinator, 207-8793 or Vivian Flores, Vaccines for Children Coordinator, 207-2086.

(Reprinted from September, 1996 Needle Tips; revised 4/8/97)

National Hepatitis Conference comes to Texas

This year's National Hepatitis Coordinators Conference is going to be held in Austin from May 19-21, 1998. This year, the theme of the conference is "Achieving the Goal of Hepatitis Elimination." Hepatitis Coordinators, Immunization Program Managers, STD Program Managers and staff members from the National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention will convene in Austin to discuss strategies for hepatitis prevention and control across the county. For more information, please contact Lin Watson, R.N. at 207-8793.

One of four of America's children is not fully protected against childhood diseases.

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National Infant Immunization Week -- A Week of Opportunity



Although immunization rates in our country are high and the occurrence of disease is low, many children are still underimmunized. Approximately one in four newborn to 2-year-old children in the United States is not properly immunized against infectious and potentially deadly diseases, such as measles, whooping cough, and diphtheria.

The good news is that more children in the past few years have been vaccinated than ever before. This is due in large part to the efforts of thousands of individuals throughout our communities. These community members have worked diligently to raise awareness about childhood immunizations and to ensure that underimmunized children receive their necessary vaccinations.

Community efforts are still needed to reach the goal of immunizing at least 90 percent of America's 2-year-olds by the year 2000. National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW), April 19-25, 1998, offers a chance to highlight the role we all play in raising infant immunization rates across the country. The campaign offers communities the opportunity to promote childhood vaccinations and to build awareness about the important role that communities play in this effort. Together, we can carry the immunization message to all members of every community, city, and county throughout the Nation. This year's message is **Don't Wait--Vaccinate.**

Presently, the greatest challenges facing infant immunization revolve around the public perception that we do not have a childhood immunization problem in this country. Issues such as violence, drug abuse, education, and other health problems tend to garner the most media attention and public interest, and, as a

result, immunization does not get the attention it deserves. But it is a fact: Too few children in our communities are fully immunized and are at risk for vaccine-preventable diseases.

Through combined local, regional, and national efforts, NIIW can help to raise infant immunization rates and bring in more diverse partners to contribute to the effort to protect our Nation's children.

The SAMHD has planned a variety of events designed to increase awareness of the importance of childhood immunizations. On April 15th the City Council will issue a proclamation to officially designate April 19th through April 25th as Infant Immunization Week in San Antonio. The highlight of NIIW will be a special Immunization Week Kick Off and Vaccines for Children Appreciation Breakfast on April 17. The breakfast will bring together pediatricians, doctors, lawmakers and other immunization partners to address a broad range of immunization issues and topics. Invitations will be mailed to all Vaccines for Children providers. The SAMHD Immunization Program will also host open house events at all Immunization Division Clinics to celebrate NIIW. The week will culminate with the SAMHD's float entries in the Battle of Flowers Parade on April 24th and the Fiesta Flambeau parade on April 25th.

Vaccinations can protect children against 10 diseases: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Chickenpox, Hepatitis B, and Hib Meningitis.

Don't Wait -- Vaccinate.



Shot Talk

Vaccine Management for Your Clinic or Practice

Immunizations are one of the most important elements of preventative health care you can provide to your patients or clients. There are three basic elements to assuring vaccines are handled in a proper manner: equipment, well-trained people and standard operating procedures. The following elements provide a summary of vaccine do's and don'ts.

✓ It is critical that office or clinic staff follows procedures for the proper handling and storage. Designate a person to be responsible for ensuring all vaccines are handled properly and train a back-up person for this function.

✓ Be sure the refrigerator and freezer units can maintain the appropriate temperatures required for the safe storage of vaccines.

✓ Temperatures should be logged by your designated staff person at least twice daily.

✓ Store ice packs in your freezer and bottled water in the refrigerator to help maintain a stable temperature and provide an extra reserve of cold in case of power failure.

✓ Provide security and install a lock on the refrigerator and the electrical plug if possible. Post warning signs provided by the SAMHD at the plug and circuit breaker to prevent the power from being disconnected.

✓ Store polio and varicella vaccines in a freezer.

✓ Stack vaccines together by type, leaving space between them for adequate circulation of cold air.

✓ Conduct a monthly inventory to monitor vaccine use, anticipate needs, and remove expired vaccines.

✓ Store vaccine with older expiration dates in the front, newer expiration dates in the rear.

✓ Never store food in the same refrigerator or freezer used to store vaccines.

✓ Never store vaccine in the refrigerator door.

✓ Never freeze toxoids (Diphtheria or Tetanus) or vaccines containing Pertussis, Hepatitis A or B, Hemophilus B, Inactivated polio or Inactivated Influenza virus.

If you have questions on vaccine management contact Vaccine Manager, Anthony Johnson, at 921-1178.

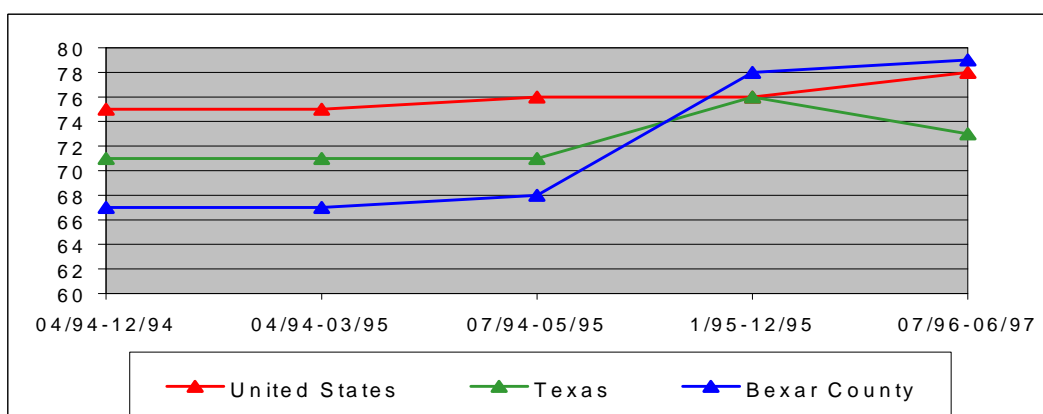
Bexar County Immunization Rates.... Best in Texas Again

On February 20, 1998 the CDC released the results of the latest National Immunization Survey (NIS) in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*. The survey is intended to provide continuing data on current vaccination coverage levels as one element of President Clinton's Childhood Immunization Initiative (CII). The NIS also enables state and local immunization programs to evaluate progress toward achieving the goals of the CII and *Healthy People 2000: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives*. The NIS survey included immunization

coverage results from 19 to 35 month old children born between August 1993 and November 1995.

According to the latest NIS report, Bexar County still has the highest immunization rates in Texas for the 4:3:1 series (4 doses of DTP, 3 doses of polio, and 1 dose of MMR). The NIS survey also scored Bexar County as having an 88% coverage level for the Hepatitis B series and a 90% coverage level for one dose of Measles vaccine in children born between August 1993 and November 1995 (highest in the state). These figures are the highest in the state and above the national average. While this most recent report is encouraging, we must all work together to reach the goal of immunizing 90% of all 2 year olds by the year 2000.

NIS Immunization Rates 07/96 – 06/97



Adult Immunization Conference Meets Again

The 1998 National Adult Immunization Conference was held in Atlanta, Georgia from March 3-4, 1998. The theme for this year's conference was "Adult Immunizations: Systematic Solutions for Providers and Communities." This conference focused on five key areas concerning methods to improve adult immunizations, namely, provider and public awareness, delivery, finance, monitoring and improving research and

development. Participants included representatives from the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), the CDC, the National Coalition for Adult Immunizations, various managed care organizations, national media organizations, and public and private immunization programs/providers. Individual state data regarding adult immunizations will be displayed in the next issue of **Shot Talk**. The underlying message from this conference was the idea that it is never too early to begin planning activities regarding adult immunization.

SAMHD Continues ACP Vaccine Study

The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (SAMHD) is currently conducting the final phase of an Acellular Pertussis (ACP) Vaccine Study. SAMHD in conjunction with North American Vaccine, Inc. has been engaged in four clinical trial studies since August 1993. This study was designed to examine the safety and immunogenicity

of a diphtheria, tetanus, and acellular pertussis (*Certiva*TM) vaccine. Over 600 Bexar County children have been enrolled in this study since 1993. For more information, please contact Rita Macias, ACP Project Coordinator at 207-8877.

Strep A in Bexar County and Around the State

The Texas Department of Health began an investigation in early January 1998 of a higher than expected number of invasive Group A streptococcal (Strep A) infections reported in Central Texas. This investigation is still underway, as new cases continue to be reported. As of March 3, 89 cases/18 deaths have been confirmed from 25 counties. At this time, only Central Texas is experiencing a higher than expected incidence of invasive strep A infection.

According to SAMHD Epidemiologist Roger Sanchez there have been 14 confirmed cases and two deaths in Bexar County through March 18, 1998 due to Invasive Group A Strep.

TDH Offers Recommendations Against Invasive Group A Strep

Following an Austin meeting of epidemiologists and others investigating the illness in Texas, TDH offered these recommendations:

- Adults with a temperature of 101 degrees or above and children with a temperature of 103 degrees or above should call a doctor for advice.
- Anyone who develops an area of unexplained local pain and tenderness, or a skin wound that gets infected (red, swollen, tender and painful) should see a doctor.
- If a child has chickenpox and the child's fever lasts more than three days or if a child who has had chickenpox for three or four days redevelops a fever, has a loss of appetite, has difficulty breathing or has lesions that appear to be infected, they should see a doctor. Parents are advised to check lesions frequently for signs of infection.
- Anyone taking an antibiotic should follow prescription orders completely, taking the medication as directed and until it is gone.
- Persons with sore throat accompanied by fever should seek medical attention, as should persons with flu-like symptoms who feel worse after three or four days.
- Children ages 1 to 13 who have not had chicken pox or been vaccinated against chicken pox, should be vaccinated.
- Acetaminophen should be given to children with chicken pox if needed to reduce fever.
- As always, people should practice good personal hygiene by not sharing toothbrushes or drinking and eating utensils and by washing hands frequently with soap and water.

Michael Kelley, M.D., head of TDH's Communicable Disease Control Bureau, stressed that these symptoms are common to many illnesses and conditions and said they do not automatically mean the invasive group A streptococcus bacteria is the cause. "Though we have seen an increase in cases, we have to remember that this is still a rare illness," Kelley said.

With the exception of two cases who are siblings, TDH epidemiologists say there is no known connection between any two of the 72 cases confirmed in residents of 19 Texas counties.

Source: TDH News Release February 26, 1998

Hepatitis A Vaccination Project Wins Award

The Hepatitis A Vaccination Project won an award for Outstanding Poster Presentation in February at the annual Texas Public Health Association conference, held in Galveston. The Hepatitis A team has continued their award winning work in targeted census tracts. To date over 20,000 doses of hepatitis A vaccine has been given. For more information about this project, contact Lin Watson, R.N., Hepatitis and Surveillance Coordinator at 207-8793 or Cynthia Harrelson, H.P.S. 207-8868.

WELCOME TO ALL OUR NEW IMMUNIZATION PARTNERS

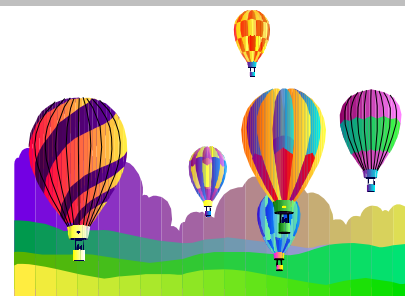
The SAMHD's Vaccines for Children Program continues to grow. Since our December newsletter, thirteen new VFC providers have come on board. Our newest members include:

KELLUM MEDICAL CLINIC/ADKINS
SOUTHEAST MILITARY W.I.C.
ALAMO CITY MEDICAL GROUP
HOWARD H. GALARNEAU, JR., D.O., P.A.
DIANE JENDREZEY, M.D.
REBECCA OLIVARES, M.D.
HEALTHTEXAS MEDICAL GROUP
NORTHEAST PEDIATRICS ASSOCIATES
BISHOP ERNEST T. DIXON CLINIC
HEALTH CHECK MEDICAL CLINIC, INC.
ALLIANCE FOR WELLNESS, P.A.
TOEPPERWEIN MEDICAL CLINIC
LITTLE TEXANS PEDIATRICS

Clinic Assessment Software Application (CASA)

What is CASA? CASA is a menu-driven relational database developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as an immunization database and assessment tool. CASA is used to conduct practice-based immunization assessments that will help provide a more accurate picture of current vaccination levels and immunization practices within San Antonio and Bexar County.

The CDC requires the SAMHD to conduct CASA'S on all the Immunization Clinics operated by the Health Department, and 75% of the Vaccine for Children (VFC) Providers.



Raise your immunization coverage levels to an all time high!

Programmatic Feedback from CASA Reports

- * Up-to-date status of children at critical age markers
- * Antigen-specific immunization levels
- * Percentage of children who start their immunizations on-time
- * Percentage of children who drop out of the vaccination schedule
- * Extent of missed opportunities for immunization

SAMHD is actively scheduling and conducting CASA assessments at this time. Any interested providers can call Brenda Lemke at 207-8867 to schedule an assessment.

The following VFC providers have been assessed using CASA: Fernando A. Guerra, M.D., M.P.H., Great Northwest Family Medical Center, Delio Garcia Romeu, M.D., Gloria Abraham-Cox, M.D., P.A., Pedro A. De Leon, M.D., Francis W. Mueller, M.D., and all SAMHD Immunization Clinics.

SAMHD Immunization Program Contacts:

Program Operations: Mark Ritter, MHA 207-8794

Immunization Clinical Operation/Foreign Travel: Lynn Seeman, RN 207-8804

Hepatitis Program/Surveillance/Rabies: Lin Watson, RN 207-8793

VFC Program: Vivian Flores 207-2086

Infant Action Plan: Pamela Williams 207-8899

Systems Analyst: Terry Boyd, MS 207-8792

Vaccine Ordering: Anthony Johnson 921-1178

Thank you for your continued support!